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AN ADDRESS TO NORMAL SCHOOL TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

THE child learns his mother tongue by absorption from his environment, and he learns it, and can learn it, in no other way. You may teach him something of his mother tongue, but you cannot do it at all by language lessons; you can do it only as you are yourself a part of his environment, your speech and your personality being in vital connection with his speech and his personality. The English teacher has his chance with the other teachers. He teaches English no more than they do. The teacher whom the boys and girls run to meet, whom they look upon with love and admiration, whom they are anxious to please, and whose voice charms their ear, this is the English teacher, whatever her subject. The admired, loved teacher is a great element in a child's total environment. The cold, formal teacher plays no part in the drama of the child's life, and teaches him no English, though English be her subject, and though she have books of language exercises in which she assigns regular lessons, and please the supervisors by getting classes through the pages of these books at the proper rate.

What I am saying is the simple truth. You cannot ask nature to suspend her laws. You cannot, of set purpose, teach the mother tongue. Nobody, young or old, ever learns any English he does not want, or fails to learn any English he does

want; and every man has his own English, to which you may add by offering him, not words, but thoughts that amuse or worry, and which require words for their expression and retention.

I find in school the differences between pupils as to language to be just as great as the differences in social position and intellectual activity. The long courses in language exercises, which all have had alike, have done apparently nothing at all towards leveling original and inherent distinctions. So of course it must be; I am not surprised. Pupils at school are still learning from their environment, learning what they absorb without knowing it, and the school usually adds little else to the environment than the discipline, a valuable element, of course, but not related to intellectual ambition or speech culture. Books of language exercises are inert and worthless as elements of the child's mental environment. That they are so believed in by our governing bodies destroys my respect for the wisdom of the governing bodies.

The things I am saying seem strange only because they are spoken in a schoolhouse by a teacher to teachers; but they are the things that I read on every hand in the essays of men and women who speak through magazine and newspaper articles. You all know Stanley Hall. Dr. Hall says in the *Outlook*, "the cause of this deterioration" in young persons' English "I think, must be ascribed to the kind and amount of language lessons that have lately come into such prominence. My own opinion is that the vernacular should never be taught, as such, to children, except in the most incidental way, but that conversation and writing about subjects concerning which interest is very strongly aroused is the best way to secure an effective use of English."

You note that President Hall speaks on this matter exactly as I do, only he says "the vernacular should never be taught," and I say the vernacular cannot be taught. The more you attempt to teach the vernacular, the more good energy you waste, and the more obstacles you put in the way of the function of the school of creating for the child an intellectually stimulating environment.

Absolutely you cannot give to the still linguistically unconscious child any language whatever by offering him language as a thing by itself, apart from the spiritual content, the meaning, the thought, which you speak or write. The silly books of language lessons presuppose the child can take an interest in the form of a phrase, in the correctness of it as an analyzable work of art, subject to rules which he, when he talks, must obey. Now my contention may still again be reiterated here, that this presupposition of the language lesson books is philosophically monstrous, because it involves the attempt to fight against nature. There may, or may not, come to the youth a time when an ambition to thrive in the world seizes upon his soul and rouses some of his hitherto dormant faculties. He may, thinking of the figure he cuts in society, begin to question his own speech, to hear himself talk and see himself write. We are familiar with the belated, groping youth who wants a rhetoric, a grammar, to learn his own language. All at once it seems to him he does not know English. He is ridiculed by professors and business men, who ask him where he went to school. And the poor teachers blush with shame and cry *peccavimus*, we have sinned, we will at once proceed to ply our lesson books and our rhetorics with greater vigor and insistence. Professor Hill and scores of professors more make new and improved editions. How can it be that a youngster who has been pushed through Hill can still be guilty of shortcomings in his English?

But the chances are altogether that the youth, whatever elements of self-consciousness he may attain as he advances through puberty and into adult life, will never fairly achieve linguistic self-consciousness and become a critic of his own speech. The school-child remains sundered from that efflorescence of the intellectual life by an enormous, unimaginable interval, which it is utterly impossible to bridge. The rhetoric-maker, the language exercise-maker, fancies he can mediate somehow between scientific rhetoric and grammar on the one hand, and primary instruction on the other, as if there were some mitigated or softened form of science, some sugar-coated form of science, as it were, that could be administered to babes. The objective nature-sciences

are in a very different category from the subjective sciences that require mental introversion and, even at the outset, involve an abstract terminology. There is a lovely botany for children, a zoölogy into which they enter with zest; there is no rhetoric, no grammar for children, into which they enter with zest, or enter, in fact, in any way whatever. For, though you, as a strenuous teacher, insist on attention, and easily get the semblance of it, do you not know that this apparent attention, given in obedience to a demand, is, in truth, a mere image of the real thing, and is, essentially, not attention at all, but a harmful ghost of attention, that stalks through your scholastic rooms, blunting your professional insight, teaching you to acquiesce in forms, reducing your function to formalism and you to a formalist?

The child learns his English unconsciously. His English takes care of itself. As his mind expands, so does his speech. The speech possession is always an exact correlate of the general mental content. If the child's mind does not expand, neither does his English; if his intellect, his heart, make gains, his language also makes gains. Absolutely the only way to affect his English is to affect his mental or spiritual nature. Wayward youth, whose minds dwell wholly on ignoble things, acquire an ignoble English, and, as college students, are still vulgar in expression, showing, in their ignorance or disregard of the courtesies and amenities of speech, their unculture and coarseness, the outcome of lives essentially wilful, that have but ill learned the great lesson of obedience to law. If college students' English is bad, the badness lies far deeper than rhetoric can reach.

The child learns his English solely from contact with his environment. But he learns and forgets the English which he never has occasion to use. At any given time of his adolescent or adult life, he can understand, and can for his own purposes, command, only the English to which he is habituated, just as he can entertain only the thoughts that link themselves to thoughts already consciously possessed by his mind. I cannot read a treatise on quaternions; I have not the requisite English. For everybody the line is drawn somewhere. Where the line is

drawn depends on education, association, natural endowment. We get our English with our education—not with the education that is gauged by examinations, but with the education that becomes organic and vital in our natures and makes us spiritually the persons that we are.

Thus the child's English comes to him with all his intellectual and emotional acquisitions; and without an intellectual or emotional acquisition there comes to him no English at all. We must understand what we mean by an intellectual acquisition. As teachers under supervision and following routine, we assign lessons and hear them recited; and if the recitation is glib, we think our teaching is successful, and we think the child must have added to his stock of knowledge. But we may be sure that no mental assimilation has taken place unless the child dwells on what he has learned, reverts to it spontaneously, grows inquisitive about it, and develops speech with his fellows concerning the matter that is stirring in his mind. This happy issue attends the work of some teachers, and especially of those who have the happy gift of guiding and stimulating the young instincts of collecting, drawing, constructing, writing.

Thus, in one sense, we cannot teach the vernacular at all; and in another sense we cannot avoid teaching the vernacular. Our direct efforts to teach English with books full of detached sentences and lessons about the way we ought to talk and write, are utterly futile, seen to be so by any disinterested observer, obviously doomed to be so by the simplest, most basic axioms of child psychology. The whole formal apparatus of primary and grammar-school English should be swept away, not by any means because it has at length become, but because it always was, in the very nature of things, unphilosophical, irrelevant, impotent.

Would I therefore abolish the English department from our school programs? Not at all. What I would abolish I hope I have made sufficiently plain. That which I would magnify, that to which I would look for positive results, for lasting impressions, for genuine lingual acquisitions, I must now try to set forth.

The child learns his speech primarily through the ear, and will long continue to learn it through no other channel. It

belongs to an advanced stage of culture to learn through the eye, to look up definitions in dictionaries, to examine the relations of words. Few pupils in any grade of school do dictionary work with spontaneity. The word is essentially a spoken thing, a combination of sounds; not a written or printed thing, a combination of visual symbols. The printed word is a sign: it is a sign of a spoken word. The child learns all his language by listening, and is conscious of hearing, not at all the language you employ, but the thought you utter. It is the thought that enters his soul and makes him listen. If he is indifferent to what you say, he simply does not listen, though he may recite it back or write it back by way of examination and qualify himself for your approval. He listens when he applies his eyes and ears to make sure he catches what you say, and fears he may lose what comes next.

First and most important in any grade of school, so far as concerns language-teaching, is *listening*; and the most important professional accomplishment in any teacher is the art of being listened to. This is, in truth, the pedagogic art of arts; and it is but the lowest rudiment of this art to be able to discriminate between the listening that is regular and perfunctory and the listening that really enlists the mind and is the product of curiosity.

I know perfectly well that I am merely serving up old truisms; and I know just how skeptical old teachers are as to the applicability and serviceableness of these familiar contentions. I have not taught all these years, not to know exactly the attitude of what we may call the conventional orthodoxy of our supervision. Again and again I have had to hear, and shall yet hear many times, I doubt not, that our teachers are incompetent, and that ideas that may recommend themselves by a certain specious reasonableness could not possibly be carried into practical effect for lack of intelligence or skill in those whom we laboriously train for the teaching function. I have always considered the urging of this objection as being merely a convenient way of closing the discussion; as much as to say—We do not see the way clear to changing our practice; we have our great system

running with some smoothness, and really do not want to be disturbed: please let us talk about something else.

But let me come back to my subject, which is Listening and being Listened to. What is that supreme qualification of the teacher by virtue of which she provides for herself a genuinely attentive audience—an audience that strains every nerve to hear, and therefore listens to good effect, imbibing now satisfaction for the emotions, now satisfaction for the intellect, and imbibing always as much language as belongs to these satisfactions, because it is their necessary vehicle and investment, by which they find permanent lodgment in the spiritual nature? The question is a large one; you all recognize it as an old one. Every teacher sincerely interested in her work finds that she has to feel her way—she has to draw upon her resources.

Now no teacher can teach any subject whatever, and teach it successfully, without at the same time teaching language; so that the teacher who has charge of all the subjects taught in a class room, and presides over its discipline, is at every moment a teacher of English, and should be ever conscious of this pedagogic truth. But as special teacher of English, having in her program a period that bears the rubric *English*, she must draw upon a different stock of resources from those she uses in number or science, must go deeper down into her knowledge and experience, and above all must avail herself of all the deposits with which her æsthetic, emotional life has enriched her nature. The English hour makes such drafts upon the spiritual vigor of the teacher who really means to put her soul into her work that it is necessary to relieve an intense listening-exercise by resorting to the utilities, the mechanics, of spoken and written speech, and having exercises in penmanship, spelling and punctuation, things so essential to making a good appearance in the world, how much or how little soever one possesses of the illimitable treasure of English. These things, of course, we will not leave undone. The greatest relief I find after a season of hard mental application is to undertake a piece of drudgery. The ideal school will produce decent spellers, neat users of the pen, correct

users of capitals and small letters. This let me recognize as a matter of course.

But the main thing we have to concern ourselves about is the illimitable treasure of English, of which the child is destined to gain just so much or so little as he gains of knowledge, as he experiences of emotion. Now the great storehouse of language is for us all the literature which lies all about us, which ranges from lullaby to epic, which speaks to every age and every degree, if we will but let it speak. The reading habit is, in truth, the great moral safeguard of life. The habitual reader grows imperceptibly into the possession of a literary, that is, a copious and correct, English. It is for the school to plant the seeds of literary taste, to foster their growth with unremitting care.

Hence I maintain that the prime qualification of the teacher, so far as she is a teacher of English, is an acquaintance with our literature. And I cannot but regard it as the first duty of the Normal School, whatever metaphysics of method it may favor, to devote its energies to exploring the field of child literature, that its graduates may begin at once to try the efficacy of simple verse and moving story upon young minds. What the young women who come to your schools chiefly lack is initiation into the meaning and power of literature; and the main thing for them to acquire, to the extent to which they are going to be teachers of English, is familiarity with a considerable body both of prose and verse. A young woman who has not been much of a reader, but who proposes to teach, must be set to reading, not analytically and learnedly, with studious annotation, but simply, in some quantity, rapidly, with all possible enjoyment, so as to gain a considerable bulk of memorable matter and to receive many and divers impressions.

The Normal School should know what authors and pieces are to be regarded as classic in the educational sense, which will be by no means the same as classic in the usual conventional sense of literary history. The Normal School should have its child library, so as to study, with the apparatus at hand, the satisfactions of the young imagination; so as to discover what

is the stimulus to which children of every age most readily respond. With regard to these matters the normal graduate should have distinct conceptions, knowing the aim of her procedures, possessing a substantial mass of literary acquisition, and knowing how to increase this acquisition by constant research and experiment.

Were I to conduct an examination of a normal graduate professing competency to teach English, I would note the following points :

First, the voice. As the child is to learn all his earliest literature by the ear, and is destined long to continue to learn most of his literature by hearing it, rather than by reading it, the voice to which he has to listen is seen at once to be an element of the teaching function of the most profound importance. The speaking teacher—the listening child ; this is the situation. The question is, do the chords in the spiritual nature of the child vibrate in response to the tones of the teacher's voice ? Is the teacher's voice sympathetic ? Is it flexible, susceptible of modulation, expressing the content of poem or story, so as to interpret, to enhance the significance of the literary work and make it take effect ? Anything you undertake to read, whether verse or prose, may, as it were, be killed outright in the utterance, and so be thrown away and wasted, a futile, ridiculous school exercise. There is nothing spoken in the schoolroom, whether in the way of formal reading or of conversation, that may not be spoken well and impressively, and will not, naturally, be so spoken if the teacher preserves the mood of cheerful serenity, is not overcome with a sense of the dignity of her situation, and remains always utterly oblivious of the presence of Mrs. Grundy. I have been present and heard teachers speak to classes in a curiously affected tone that sometimes sounds like that of a ventriloquist, intended to deceive ; or it reminds me of the voice assumed by the car-conductors when they announce the streets, as if meant to be official, as becomes the servants of great corporations.

Now I believe it quite possible for the Normal Schools to do something positive and valuable in the way of direct voice

culture. I never heard that any college included vocal training among the requisites for admission. Therefore, of course, such training has no figure in our secondary schools, which have become accustomed to regard the college requirements as the beau ideal of secondary education. But the community makes great demands for vocal culture, and has to get its satisfaction of this demand in the special schools of oratory and reading, which everywhere thrive. These schools, I am convinced, do much good. Very often it happens to me to hear a girl read with special grace, so that her classmates are at once struck with a certain impressiveness in her manner, as by a novel experience, and when I ask her if she has had special training in expression, to be told that she has, in this or that school. The efficacy of training in the use of the voice is quite as great as the efficacy of training in the use of the muscles. I shall not be understood, of course, as meaning that all voices can be trained to one pattern. Voices are as different as characters, but they can be improved by culture as surely as can the intellect or the moral nature. The natural quality or timbre of the voice, by virtue of which it has individuality so that we recognize an acquaintance as quickly by his voice as by his features and figure, will not be leveled to any professional standard. Training is rather to be conceived as a release of the voice from trammels, from habitudes acquired in long association with the commonplace. The life that has known little or nothing of the world of literary expression announces its emotional, its æsthetic poverty in the voice. Your business is to enrich this life. Your psychology contributes its humble quota to this result, far more is accomplished by your science of nature and your history ; but the mainstay of your purely cultural, personality-improving activity, must ever remain literature.

Still imagining myself playing the strange rôle of examiner of a normal graduate applying for a situation as English teacher, I should make it the second point of my inquisition to investigate her *attitude towards poetry*. How does she conceive poetry ; what does she understand it to be ; does she have any appreciation of its enormous historical value ; on what principles does she read

verse; what is her idea of the relative importance, in poetry, of content and form? These things I should determine in but very slight degree by asking formal questions, for it is the upshot of my multifarious experience in teaching that nothing is more apt to miss essential truth than formal examination, and in the examination which I am conducting I do not want to elicit things remembered but to ascertain by the most naïf expressions and revelations the genuine mental and emotional status of my candidate. This she will show in various ways. She will show it chiefly by the way she reads verse, by the verse she selects to read, by her ability to discern poetic motives, to show what motives are the favorites with the poets. Let me emphasize this point. That normal training in literature goes wrong which aims chiefly to accumulate rememberable details, which analyzes and tabulates, making schemes of periods, characteristics, lives of authors. Things rememberable are also things forgettable. A right normal training in literature issues in a status, a condition of culture and taste, which has not much to remember and forget, but which exists and develops, and expresses itself in the life in response to the infinite solicitations of social intercourse and the spontaneous movings of curiosity. This mental state is an indivisible unit, incapable of analysis, quite beyond detection by written examinations. It must express itself, and cannot avoid expressing itself, just as the well-mannered person cannot deport himself badly.

My candidate at once announces her competency or incompetency to teach English by the way she reads verse. If she reads verse well she is pretty sure to read prose well: only I hope she will not read verse as prose or try to read it so, as I perceive many most scholarly teachers are wont to do. I hope she appreciates the value of poetic form, and does not try to obscure the form, the measure, the lilt, the rime, out of deference to the syntax and the coherence of the argument. She will not be asked by me to give the meaning of a poem in prose paraphrase, unless it be by way of punishment for some abysmal blunder. All the ancient listeners to bards and minstrels expected downright song, with time and measure distinctly marked. Their function was

called singing. The mother still sings the child-verse. During the primary years the singing habit fades away. At last the relics of it come to be viewed as ridiculous, and stigmatized as sing-song. Mrs. Grundy now presides over the reading exercise; and she, you know, is the genius and protectress of that exacting ritual which we know under the name of written examinations.

Naturally, holding the opinions I have expressed, I do not expect the normal graduate to remember somebody's definition of poetry. I shall not ask her what poetry is, but I shall give her an opportunity to show what generalizations she may have made of poetic motives and of verse-forms, what observations she may have made of the peculiarities of poetic diction. She need not try to tell me what poetry is, but I shall expect her to mention a few things that it is not. Where comes the distinction between prose and poetry? Is this distinction identical with that between prose and verse? To answer such questions she must have done some thinking and come to some conclusions.

In short, our normal graduate must, with regard to English poetry, be not only intelligent and well-informed, but also susceptible, impressible; and no less must she be capable of expression, she must stand towards her work in the attitude of an artist. Her voice is her instrument: can she play upon it with skill and power?

And now, thirdly, what is our candidate's theory regarding the kind of literature which ought to be given to boys and girls? This is an important matter.

To know what to recommend to children to read, we must observe what it is to which they naturally take. I cannot surmise any better—hardly any other—principle to guide our choice. We teachers greatly restrict our influence by hypercriticism as to the literary merit and the educative value of books. There are current in society certain strong expressions of contempt for books that grown-up people of culture do not read; for books costing as little as a dime; for books whose covers perhaps are yellow. I find many people whose entire theory of juvenile reading is founded on these wholly unscientific saws. How absurd it looks to the old dyspeptic to see girls eating their

cake, their pickles, their chocolate creams; and boys munching apple after apple. Is this juvenile appetite vicious, or is it natural? This I believe, that the duty of the student of childhood is to investigate this appetite and inform the world whether it is depraved. Meanwhile I consider it natural. The child has by nature an appetite for stories; he listens to them while he is young, and reads them as he grows older. But he wants stories told in the English he knows, or in English only a little larger than his own, and which tell of people in situations he can realize, doing deeds that fire his imagination. I had a good opportunity to note what children like. A young man took charge of the library of one of our numerous institutions in the nature of the college settlements. Once a week the children came flocking to him to get books. They were primary school children, knowing how to read. Their eagerness to get books was intense; but they knew what they wanted as well as you and I know what we want. Chiefly they wanted fairy stories, or, rather, the girls did; the boys wanted tales of war and Indians, tales of adventure, such as the Henty books. The interesting thing to note was that they wanted books, and were as anxious to get them as if they lived in a bookless city. The formality of the public library barred them completely. So I find high-school girls unwilling to go to the public library, but eager to borrow of me the current novels. In fact, I think it requires a happy mixture of two or three of the cardinal virtues to become a public library habitué.

Why are the children so bent on getting reading matter? What does nature mean by giving them this literary appetite? What is there in the child's constitution that craves the stimulus of fiction? To answer this question we have but to consider why we want our novels, our poems, our stories of adventure and heroism. Our lives run in narrow channels, our work is confining and monotonous, the people we meet are commonplace, our daily walk and conversation brings us into petty relations with human beings dreadfully like ourselves, who seem to dread strife and collision with social and political evils. Few persons live lives of mere animality; every one has his discontents, noble or base, his worry, his hopes and beliefs. The prevailing sentiment

being that nothing can be done about it, each accumulates in his soul pent-up aspirations, which he finds no opportunity to express, or perhaps lacks the power to express, being afraid to disturb the delicate poise of his social relations or to jeopard his civil or professional standing. In short, our actual bourgeois life is only one of two lives which we lead. The other is the life of the imagination, wherein we are free, strong, daring, victorious, allied with the powers of reform, crushing the tyrannies that keep down the poor and weak, overcoming all arrogance, all injustice, all superstition. We imagine infinite things that we do not for a moment think of actually doing; in civil society these things cannot be done; for the individual to do them would be to make himself ridiculous and quixotic; for masses of individuals to do them would inaugurate revolution. But everything can be done in fiction. Here we find ourselves in the midst of a seething world. Here is battle; here is no slumbering in ignoble peace. In fiction we find our spiritual outlet. The poetry, the fiction, of the race are as much a legitimate product of its life as are laws and churches. We read fiction because we have ideal cravings; we must have expansion. I see nothing to regret in the enormous preponderance of fiction in our publishers' lists and in the circulation of our libraries. The unhappy critics of the people's reading are fortunately doomed to waste their lamentations. I can hardly conceive a greater social calamity than the utter extinction of fiction from the world, and even any partial repression of it would work far more evil than good. Wholly wise is the system by which the public undertakes to supply its readers, old and young, with fiction.

Now the children have their life of the imagination just as we adults do; only in the children this life is keener, more undisturbed by the misgivings of conventional moralizing about duties, more clamorous for satisfaction, and more easily satisfied. The adult who lives in a whirl of social excitement has his ideal longings in some measure answered and stilled by his association with a brilliant world devoted to refined and elevating pleasures. The children of the bookless home, knowing nothing of the possibilities of the intellectual and the æsthetic life, are

in a state of imaginative hunger. They seek for food to content this hunger with a pitiful eagerness. They are starving, not for knowledge, but for visions. We are coming to know something of the barrenness, the dreariness, the monotony of their spiritual environment. I shall be told of many among them who cannot be got to read. Some want the club, some the theater, some, in spite of school and library, gravitate to the saloon. The world of philanthropy is wrestling with the problem these present. But to the mass of the children who come from bookless homes the school has given the key to literature; we may assume that most children can read and will read with zest books put into their hands that they can understand—books that are fitted to their natures. They are just like you and me. Will you read a heavy, stupid book? Do you acknowledge anybody's right to prescribe your reading? If you do, you are in the state of tutelage. You know what you want, or you know when you find your ideas in an author, when he speaks to you, carries you along with him, enlarges your conceptions, chains your attention. Children, of course, do not criticise. Perhaps you yourself do not criticise, but simply stop reading when the writer grows dull and lets you wander.

From intelligent children there is doubtless something to be learned by direct questioning as to their approval or disapproval of books that we think they ought to like. But the lesson we have to learn about juvenile likes and dislikes, we must, of course, learn by observation. There are certain blossoms on which, in the blooming-time, the bees settle, to the neglect of almost all others. Given free access to a variety of books, what do the children 'light upon'?

The books that children choose when their choice is free are the books to put in their way, not, of course, without preliminary examination—for it is conceivable that into a book pleasing to the young, silliness or even immorality should have found entrance. A new book that children take to everywhere is a great gain for education in English. Hence I consider that my normal graduate should take profound interest in observing children, and should be absolutely free from the old prejudice that

nature is an unsafe guide. Who has learned the secret of the readableness of a book not merely to children, but to adults of any age? We never know whether a book is readable till we and our contemporaries have tried it. We should try to establish a classical canon, as it were, of children's books; or, rather, we should let the children establish their canon, we serving only as observers, recorders, collectors, and distributors. Towards founding such a canon, the normal schools should endeavor to agree on the principles of selection and rejection. Such a task will require much discussion, frequent conference, and constant intercommunication. What do children like? Are we in the way of speaking contemptuously of children's likings? Do the books that children like appear to us feeble, inane, unnatural? Are not their dolls, their little railway trains, feeble, inane, unnatural? I do not speak as one initiated in the mystery of child-study. About all that you must teach me. I simply ask of this normal graduate, with whom we have played school now quite long enough, whether she is prepared so fully to enter into the child life, as to accept without misgiving the data of observation, and to found on these data her philosophy of juvenile reading.

But it is time that I make a brief résumé of the main points I have endeavored to enforce, and so release your attention, in accordance with a wise pedagogy, from a strain liable to defeat its own ends by insisting on too much.

The child can learn his own language only by absorption from his environment; and we teachers can teach him his own language only by becoming a part of this environment. This absorption goes on unconsciously whenever the conditions favor its action. The first and absolutely essential condition of the absorbing process is that the child be interested. His mind is not receptive unless it be interested. Any educational procedures that profess to have in view the culture of the will by keeping the child under duress and compelling him to perform tasks in which his interest is not enlisted, whatever else they may accomplish, will have absolutely no potency to teach him language. The English teacher must surrender to the Herbartian

interest-principle—must surrender unconditionally and without reservation.

The child must be interested, and the teacher must be interesting. To be interesting, the teacher must possess qualifications both personal and professional. She must begin by having, if possible, a good voice; or, at any rate, a voice trained to its best efficiency. She must understand the emotional elements in prose and verse, and must know how to use her voice in modulation, emphasis and inflection, so as to reproduce in the mind of a listener the emotion which the creative writer, the artist, meant to express. She must be an adept in literary expression. Whatever vocal culture can do for any one should have been done for her.

Then she should know what the good literature is that naturally attracts children, and she should have learned, so far as possible, what are the peculiarities of child-attracting stories and poems, in order that by this study she may, to some extent, read the child's mind, and be also furnished with resources for the English hour. She must observe children, and be ready to digest the result of her observations and to assimilate her conclusions to her pedagogic code.

All her activity must be founded on the cardinal principle of English teaching, that thought and language are inseparable; that language without thought is unthinkable in education; and that what interests the child is always the thought, and never the language.

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